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ABSTRACT

In cooperation with the Indiana University Department of Telecommunications, the Video Access Center (VAC) in Columbus, Indiana has undertaken a two phase evaluation of its activities. The first phase, done in 1974, was designed to (1) compare VAC to other public access centers throughout the country, (2) determine the size and demographic composition of the VAC audience, and (3) assess the attitudes of Columbus residents toward public access television. A series of recommendations for changes resulted from the initial evaluation. This report describes the second phase of the evaluation and includes (1) descriptive information on the development of the Columbus VAC from February 1974 to February 1975, (2) a quantitative analysis of television viewing by cable subscribers in Columbus, and (3) data, based on 200 telephone interviews, on the reaction of Columbus residents to VAC. Recommendations for future programing and promotional activities are included at the conclusion of the document. (DGC)

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THE COLUMBUS VIDEO ACCESS CENTER:
A RESEARCH ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC REACTION

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INTRODUCTION

The Video Access Center (VAC) in Columbus, Indiana, has helped pioneer the development of public access to television in the United States. Its facilities, equipment, staff, funding and programming far surpass those of access centers in markets of equal and larger size. This success is due to the people who have planned, operated and supported the center from its beginning in 1972.

In February, 1974, in conjunction with the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation, VAC also took the lead in systematically determining public awareness of and response to its program of public access television. In cooperation with the Department of Telecommunications at Indiana University, VAC assessed the reactions of Columbus residents to public access television in general and VAC programming in particular.

The 1974 research evaluation of VAC was designed to: (1) compare VAC to other public access centers throughout the nation; (2) determine the size and demographic composition of the VAC audience; and (3) assess the attitudes of Columbus residents toward public access to television. Using the diary method to

gather quantitative data on TV viewing in Columbus as well as in-depth personal interviews to assess attitudes, the researchers reached the following conclusions and recommendations.

(1) VAC is superior in facilities, equipment, staff, funding and hours of operation to public access centers in comparable or larger market situations. Recommendations: VAC, as well as other access centers, must become more cost efficient as the economic situation curtails the level of financial support available from cable companies, governmental agencies and foundations. In addition, VAC should seek out and develop alternate sources of funding to minimize its dependence of any single operation.

(2) The audience of the Video Access Center is small and undifferentiated. There is no evidence of a small, loyal group of VAC viewers; there is no evidence of a particular type of VAC programming responding to a clear audience need and thus providing a basis of service on which to build. Recommendations: VAC should select a target audience and program directly to the needs of that audience; one such group consists of Columbus residents interested in local news and information. Once that audience is secure, VAC should turn to other identifiable groups and follow the same strategy.

(3) Many residents of Columbus were both unfamiliar and uninformed with respect to VAC. Recommendations: VAC should be visible in the local media; VAC should be identified by one name and one name only; VAC should actively promote its activities throughout the community.

(4) VAC must become involved with the Columbus community; the long-term maintenance of a public access center is dependent on its integration into the community in which it exists. Recommendations: VAC must seek out community groups and

> demonstrate its willingness to assist in any manner possible; VAC must show itself to be a useful, important part of the community, providing services and opportunities not available through other community agencies.

Details on these conclusions and recommendations, as well as other analyses, are contained in The Columbus Video Access Center: A Research Evaluation of Audience and Public Attitudes, the final report of the 1974 project (ERIC#: ED094738).

In the year which has passed since the report was issued, efforts have been made to implement its recommendations and develop programs aimed at target groups within the community. In addition, VAC itself has undergone a number of programming, promotional and staff changes to improve the quality and quantity of service available to the residents of Columbus.

Against this background, as well as the continuing need for audience data on which to base meaningful managerial decisions, the Video Access Center, in February, 1975, asked that a second study be conducted to assess its impact on the Columbus community. In particular, VAC management, in consultation with the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation, wanted to gather information concerning:

(1) Development and progress--audience response to programming changes since the last sur-

vey; changes in the VAC audience; most remembered programs; development of a loyal audience; increased reach among cable subscribers.

(2) Use of VAC--participation in productions; use of equipment; appearance on programs; attendance at VAC presentations.

(3) Audience attitudes toward VAC--awareness of VAC; perceived differences between regular over-the-air broadcasts and VAC; evaluation of VAC quality both in terms of signal received and program content; value of VAC programs; attitudes toward local programming in the areas of art, skills training, news, sports, community issues and entertainment.

(4) Audience size and composition--information on the TV viewing habits of Columbus cable subscribers with emphasis on the VAC audience.

This report presents the results of the second research evaluation designed to meet these management needs. Chapter I provides descriptive information on the development of the Columbus Video Access Center from February, 1974 to February, 1975. Chapter II presents a quantitative analysis of television viewing by cable subscribers in Columbus, Indiana. Chapter III provides data, based on 200 telephone interviews, on the reactions of Columbus residents to VAC. In each instance, emphasis is placed on changes which have occurred since the 1974 evaluation was completed. Chapter IV presents a brief overview of the 1975 evaluation with emphasis on its conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER I

THE COLUMBUS VIDEO ACCESS CENTER

INTRODUCTION

Across the nation, the cable television industry has experienced a dramatic reduction in its rate of growth and expansion. The reasons for this are primarily economic: rising cost of materials; high interest rates which make capital expansion difficult; inflationary pressures on the consumer which force suspension or delay in cable subscription. In short, the promising future so often predicted for cable television by experts throughout the 1960's has been delayed by the harsh, economic realities of the 1970's.

Most public access centers have come upon "hard times" as well. Cable companies can no longer afford to support public access on a continuing basis; they have shifted their developmental emphasis from public service and "wired nation" plans to programming designed to significantly increase revenue in the immediate future.[1] Foundations have substantially reduced their

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[1] Somewhat sympathetically, the FCC has recognized the difficulties now confronting cable companies and temporarily accepted the necessity of varying levels of compliance with cable regulations governing the development of a public access channel.

level of funding for many activities. And the costs of equipment, staff and space have increased. As a consequence, access centers in various locations have either closed down or severely curtailed their level of activity. In other areas, plans to initiate public access to television have been postponed indefinitely. Thus, what promised to be a wide-spread movement has been temporarily limited in scope by the current economic crisis.

Despite the national situation, the Columbus Video Access Center has managed to make progress in both the level of community activity initiated and the number of programs produced. Perhaps, because it was firmly established prior to the development of the current economic situation, VAC has not been effected as much as other centers. Perhaps, because it has responded to economic realities with sound managerial decisions, VAC has been able to continue its forward movement. For whatever reason, VAC remains one of the few exceptions to the general decline in public access activity now taking place throughout the nation.

What follows is a brief description of VAC activity throughout the last year in the areas of personnel and administration, promotion, community involvement and programming. It is intended to summarize the manner

in which VAC management responded to the conclusions and recommendations of the 1974 evaluation before the quantitative and qualitative data from the 1975 assessment are presented.[2]

PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

In mid-summer of 1974, when Virginia Rouse was appointed Director of the Columbus Video Access Center, she was confronted with rising operating costs and declining revenue. Funding for a number of promising projects had been rejected by various governmental agencies.

In response to this situation, the size of the VAC staff was temporarily cut. An arrangement for contractual repair of the equipment was made and the engineer dismissed; the studio manager responsible for night programming was terminated; and a third person was reduced from full-time to part-time and, after four weeks, opted to resign. While these reductions imposed additional burdens on the remaining staff, the net result was a continuation of VAC activity with greater cost efficiency.

In the months which followed, as VAC was able to

[2]Information presented here was made available by Virginia Rouse, Director of the Video Access Center. Comments and interpretations are the responsibility of the researchers.

secure new support from various local, state and federal agencies, the size of the VAC staff was again expanded without draining the VAC operating budget. The Driftwood Valley Arts Council and the Indiana Arts Commission had provided funds for an arts coordinator; arrangements were completed for a VISTA volunteer to work with low-income families and the disadvantaged; and CETA (Comprehensive Educational and Training Act) funds were obtained to hire a studio manager to handle night programming.

A desirable by-product of the personnel shifts which have occurred during the last year is the localization of VAC staff. During its infancy, VAC had to rely on individuals who moved to Columbus to begin public access to television. Now, it has become possible to find people from the Columbus area who have the necessary background and skills. Thus, the majority of the current staff is native to Columbus. This change can contribute substantially to community identification and the long-term integration of VAC into the Columbus vicinity.

VAC has also vigorously pursued outside funding for program production. During 1974, Human Side of the News was initially funded by the Indiana Committee for the Humanities; a contract with the hospital allowed VAC to produce ten programs for closed-circuit distri-

bution; and recently, a series of six programs, tentatively titled Literature and Life, has been fundod by the Indiana Committee for the Humanities. Other grant applications are pending. It is significant to note that VAC has secured a considerable amount of external support, for both staff and programming, at a time when economic resources are scarce.

PROMOTION

VAC activity in the area of promotion has substantially increased during the last year. A partial list of promotional activities is presented below. Although no single item represents a major step, the group as a whole demonstrates VAC concern with presenting itself to the residents of Columbus.

Promotional Activities

- A single name, VAC-7 (Video Access Center cablecasting on Channel 7), has been used to identify all of the center's activity; this one name on stationary, graphics, promotions, program schedules and publicity will help the Columbus community identify and be aware of the Video Access Center.
- The VAC-7 Director was guest on Impact, an hour-long feature on Tri-WY, the new Columbus FM station.
- VAC-7's program schedule is now published in the TV section of the Columbus newspaper, The Republic.
- VAC-7 has sponsored an "awards" night to honor individuals and groups who have pro-

duced outstanding programs since the center was opened in 1972.

- VAC-7 has provided local media with detailed information on programs and activities of interest to the Columbus community.
- VAC-7 has initiated a membership drive to interest more people in the activities of the center.
- VAC-7 has contacted local Columbus businesses in an effort to secure donations.
- VAC-7 is visible to the community through slide presentations and television programs shown in the Commons.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Perhaps the central recommendation of the 1974 evaluation was the necessity for VAC-7 to become involved in the activities of the Columbus community. VAC-7 has pursued this recommendation in two ways.

(1) It has vastly expanded the number and diversity of groups which produce or appear on VAC-7 programs. The list below presents only those groups which have appeared on VAC-7 during the last quarter of 1974.

American Association of University Women
Bible Study Club
Black Women's Sorority
Boys Club
Business and Professional Women
Columbus Arts Guild
Columbus East High School
Columbus North High School
Columbus Peace Fellowship
Columbus Symphony
Christian Rural Overseas Program
Dance Workshop
Delta Theta Tau
Dinner Theatre
Driftwood Valley Arts Council

Ecumenical Council
Employment Security Division
Exchange Club
Fire Department
Girls Club
Great Books
Headstart
Historical Society
Hoosiers for the Equal Rights Amendment
Indiana Museum of Art
IUPUI
Kinder Corner Day Care
League of Women Voters
Let's Grow Garden Club
Library
Lillian Schmidt School
Mayor's Task Force on Women
Melody Boys
Mental Health Association
Methodist Church
Model Airplane Club
Noon Optimists
Parks Department
People's Alliance
Police Department
Probation Department
Quinco (5-county mental health organization)
School Board
School Music Department
Sertoma
St. Bartholomew's School
St. Columbus School
Trogaugh Family Gospel Singers
United Way
VISTA
Wayne Township School
Welfare Department
Y-Med

(2) It has provided extensive coverage of significant issues in the Columbus area by means of special programming.

- VAC-7 joined other media to cover local election results in a four-hour program which featured candidates, their families and political leaders; the program was telecast live from the Commons.

- VAC-7 telecast a 12-hour telethon

to raise money for a county sports stadium.

- VAC-7 covered the local Community Development meetings held to determine how to spend over $2 million dollars in federal funds.

PROGRAMMING

The amount and variety of programming produced and shown by VAC-7 has increased from a total of twelve hours in January, 1973 to more than 220 hours in January, 1975. VAC-7 now operates from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with limited programming on Saturday afternoon.

During the fourth quarter of 1974, VAC-7 cablecast 639 hours of programming, consisting of 943 different shows. Of these, 333 were produced by the VAC-7 staff; 357 were partially or totally produced by the public; and the remaining 253 were tapes requested from the library during Request Time.

Brief descriptions of various, current VAC-7 productions have been provided in the space below.

Commontalk	Local residents are asked to express their views on the "topic of the day." The program is produced live from the Commons at noon on Thursday and replayed via tape that evening and the following Tuesday. Once a week, 60 min.

Human Side of the News	Local news and features on the Columbus area; interviews with government officials; emphasis on human interest and in-depth reporting. Three times per week, 30 min.
Let's Rap	Invites viewers to call VAC-7 and participate in discussion of controversial issues and topics of special interest; hostess and her guests in the studio respond.
Hear with Your Hands	Children's librarian reads a story while child of deaf parents "signs" the story for non-hearing viewers. Special education teachers and School for the Deaf are pursuing ways to use the series; various magazines have published articles on this series.
Visiting Hour	Children too young to visit hospital patients are brought to the VAC-7 studio to talk, via telephone, to their hospitalized relatives while the child is "televised" to the hospital room.
Job Services	Produced by the Indiana Employment Office; presents information on the local job situation; remote production.
Exercise Time	Woman from Parks and Recreation Department leads viewers through calisthenics; 10:00 a.m. daily.
Kaleidoscope	Weekly hour-long talk show with guests from all facets of the Columbus community.
Christians View the News	Members of the Christian community discuss current events.

Our Potted Friends	Remote production; proprietor of local greenhouse demonstrates the care and handling of plants.
Critic's Corner	Monthly program with volunteers discussing movies being shown in the Columbus area.
Request Time	Viewers call and ask VAC-7 to play a program from the tape library during unprogrammed hours. Favorite tapes are the Columbus symphony, Arts Guild musical productions and the popular "Belly Dancing" tape which was finally retired due to excessive wear.

SUMMARY

VAC-7 activity in the areas of promotion, community involvement and programming has been systematic and profitable. Efforts have been made to implement the recommendations of the 1974 evaluation. This is evidenced by the creation of a local news program, many new promotional efforts, greater interest in cooperating with the many diverse groups in the Columbus area, and the continuing attempt to secure funding from external agencies in both the public and private sectors.

CHAPTER II

TELEVISION VIEWING BY COLUMBUS CABLE SUBSCRIBERS, MARCH, 1975

PROCEDURE

The meaning of terms and the methods of data gathering and interpretation presented in this chapter replicate those applied in the audience survey portion of the 1974 study. Several changes important to interpretation of results, however, were made for the sake of economy. The sample is smaller than that surveyed in 1974. The diary reported viewing during a period of four weekdays rather than that of a full week. And viewing data was tabulated only for the hours between ten a.m. and eleven p.m. rather than for the entire broadcast day. These differences between the data base of the 1974 and 1975 studies limit the degree and validity of comparisons between results of the two studies.

The Diary. The audience of television programming available to Columbus Cablevision subscribers was estimated by a diary survey. The viewing diary reported each instance of television viewing by any member of the household during the survey days of Monday, March

3, through Thursday, March 6. The instructions printed in the diary asked that respondents list the day, time, cable channel number, program title, and age and sex of all viewers of each program watched on the principal television set connected to the cable service. Viewing by casual guests was not recorded. Sample listings were included in the diary, and a toll-free number was provided for recipients with any further questions.

Placement of Survey Diaries. Households were chosen at random from the current subscription list of the Columbus Cablevision Company. Every non-commercial listing had an equal chance of being selected. Trained interviewers contacted by phone the 250 households selected, asking the respondent's cooperation in accepting the diary for listing of the family's television viewing. Interviewers identified themselves as from the Institute for Communication Research at Indiana University, currently studying how people in Columbus use television. No reference to the cable company nor the Video Access Center was made during the phone contact or within the diary. A cash incentive of 50 cents was promised to those returning a completed diary.

The rate of acceptance was 84 percent of those asked. Diaries were mailed from Bloomington to the 210 households who agreed to accept. No diaries were returned as undeliverable. No phone inquiries were

received from diary recipients.

Preparation of the Data Base. All diary entries were transferred by trained coders to optical scan sheets at face value. If an ABC network show was reported as viewed on Channel 8, the CBS network affiliate, for instance, the information was coded as reported. A viewing instance is the reported viewing of one person watching one program for one-half hour. If three persons watched a program together, each person's viewing was coded, giving three separate viewing instances. The information coded for each viewing instance was 1) age and sex of the viewer, 2) the day and time of the viewing, 3) the channel number and 4) the type of program.

1) AGE. For the purpose of some analyses, age was also grouped into the following categories often used in television audience studies:

GROUP	YEARS INCLUDED
Children	2 through 11 years of age
Teens	12 through 17 years of age
18 thru 34	18 through 34 years of age
35 thru 49	35 through 49 years of age
50 thru 65	50 through 65 years of age
Over 65	66 years of age and older

2) TIME. Time was measured in half-hour segments from ten a.m. through eleven p.m., the hours of VAC cablecasting. For the purpose of further analysis,

time segments were grouped in day parts, periods reflecting general distinctions in the television programming day. These time divisions are:

PERIOD	HOURS INCLUDED
Morning	10:00 through 10:59 a.m.
Noon	11:00 a.m. through 12:59 p.m.
Afternoon	1:00 p.m. through 4:59 p.m.
Evening	5:00 p.m. through 6:59 p.m.
Night	7:00 p.m. through 10:29 p.m.
Late Night	10:30 p.m. through 11:00 p.m.

3) CHANNEL. Channel numbers were reported and coded according to the dial position on which they were modulated by Columbus Cablevision. They are:

CABLE CHANNEL NUMBER	STATION CALL LETTERS	STATION CHANNEL
2	WTTV, Indianapolis	4
3	WAVE (NBC), Louisville	3
5	WHMB, Indianapolis	40
6	WRTV (NBC), Indianapolis	6
7	Video Access Center	7
8	WISH (CBS), Indianapolis	8
9	WGN, Chicago	9
10	WKLY (ABC), Louisville	32
11	WHAS (CBS), Louisville	11
12	WTIU (PBS), Bloomington	30
13	WLWI (ABC), Indianapolis	13

4) PROGRAM TYPE. All programs were grouped into ten general types for purposes of analysis. The particular program viewed was judged on the basis of the

series. Though a particular episode of Daniel Boone, for instance, may appropriately be categorized as comedy or drama, the viewing instance would be coded as adventure, the category for Westerns which is the genre of the series. The following program categories were used:

(1) News and Information. Including local and national news reports; news essays such as 60 Minutes; programs with a basic news format such as Today; programs of general scientific or documentary structure such as Jacques Cousteau, Wild Kingdom, Nova, and Other People, Other Places.

(2) Game. Including celebrity-quiz shows such as Hollywood Squares and What's My Line; give-away shows such as Let's Make A Deal.

(3) Drama. Examples are theatre such as Masterpiece Theatre; soap operas such as Days of Our Lives; serials of general structure such as The Waltons, Marcus Welby, M.D. and Medical Center.

(4) Adventure. For instance, detective such as Columbo; suspense such as Night Gallery; police such as Adam 12 and Kojak; westerns such as Gunsmoke.

(5) Situation Comedy. Such programs as Maude, Gomer Pyle, USMC, The Jeffersons, Beverly Hillbillies, and Chico and the Man.

(6) Movies. Includes old films, late-night movies and made-for-television films presented in formats such as Wednesday Movie of the Week.

(7) Sports. Some examples are games, sporting anthologies, sports commentary and review, and sports-related programs such as American Sportsman.

(8) Music-Variety-Talk. Including musical shows such as Lawrence Welk and Ameri-

can Bandstand; variety format shows such as Hee-Haw, Cher and Carol Burnett; talk shows such as Phil Donahue, Merv Griffin, the Tonight Show and Indy Today.

(9) Children's. Examples would be instructional shows such as Sesame Street, The Electric Company; all cartoons; serials for children such as Sargeant Preston of the Yukon, Sea Monsters, and Captain Kangaroo.

(10) Other. Including all religious shows such as Garner Ted Armstrong and Faith for Today; shows which do not fit clearly into any other category such as Firing Line, Jack LaLanne; viewing for which no program title was given or for which no type was evident. Because Channel 7's programs do not fit the stereotyped categories of most television, all of the viewing of Channel 7 was coded in this category.

Data were then transferred to cards for computer analysis using programs of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences to generate distributions and analysis of viewing. The predetermined .05 level of confidence was used in all statistical measures.

RESULTS OF VIEWING SURVEY

Rate of Diary Return. Of the 210 diaries placed 115 were returned for a return rate of 55 percent. All diaries returned were usable. The viewing of these 115 Columbus households provided the sample of the television viewing of the full population of 3275 families served by Columbus Cablevision, and are hereafter referred to as the diary sample.

Validity of Generalizing from the Diary Sample. The size of sample and amount of variation within the measured variable determine the validity and accuracy of inferences made about the characteristics of the whole based on study of the characteristics of the sample. Given a sample size, precision is determined by the formula:[3]

$$T^2 = \frac{PC\ (100-PC)\ z^2}{N_s}$$

where T = the tolerance or precision of estimates. The discrepancy between estimates of the population based on diary sample and results of survey of all cable subscribers.

PC = the preliminary estimate of variation in the population. Based on the most recent study of mass television audience viewing behavior[2] a conservative preliminary estimate of variance of 85 was used. That is, viewing of about 15 percent of television viewers varies from overall viewing patterns.

z = the number of standard error units which are found from a normal probability table to correspond to required probability. Probability is the degree of assurance that estimates of the population are within the precision range, T.

N_s = sample size.

Utilizing the formula:

$$T^2 = \frac{85\ (100-85)\ 1.96^2}{115} = \frac{1275\ (3.8416)}{115} = 42.5917$$

$$T = 6.53$$

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[3]William L. Hays, Statistics (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, Inc., 1963).

Thus the error range is 6.5 percent, which is within the normal range of predictability for this type of study. Estimates based on the diary sample will be within ± 6.5 percent of the actual population of all Columbus cable subscribers 95 out of 100 times.

Day and Time. The 8,895 instances of television viewing recorded by the 115 cabled homes during the survey days, with slightly heavier viewing reported earlier in the period. Table 1 presents the viewing distributed by days:

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY DAY

Day	Percentage of Total
Monday, March 3	********** 27.1%
Tuesday, March 4	********** 26.3%
Wednesday, March 5	********* 23.8%
Thursday, March 6	********* 22.2%

Total number of viewing instances: 8842.

Viewing of the Columbus cable audience distributed across the hours of the day in a pattern similar to that reported in the 1974 survey. Viewing was light during the morning hours, increased slightly during the afternoon and more quickly after school hours. Over 40 percent of all viewing was during prime time, the hours

of seven through ten o'clock p.m. during the survey period. Viewing diminished rapidly during and after the late-night news at ten o'clock. Table 2 presents viewing distribution by half-hour segments across the four survey days. Table 3 presents the same distribution by day parts.

Two slight variations from the viewing reported in 1974 are notable. Viewing on Thursday in this study declines from the level of the previous weekdays whereas the 1974 survey showed Thursday viewing to be greater than that of Tuesday and Wednesday. Secondly, the time of peak evening viewing in 1975 is 60 to 90 minutes later than that reported in 1974.

Viewers. Sex and age of the viewer were analyzed as attributed to the viewing instance rather than to individuals surveyed. Distribution of all viewing by sex of the viewer indicates that 59.7 percent of all viewing was by females; 39.9 percent was by males. In 40 viewing instances (0.4 percent), the sex of the viewer was not reported.

The age of viewers surveyed ranged from two to 88 years. Four percent of all viewing was by persons who did not report their age. The distribution of viewing by age of the viewer in groups is reported in Table 4. Comparison with the results of the 1974 distribution (reported in parentheses) indicates a sharp increase

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY TIME OF DAY

Time Period	Percentage of Total
10:00-10:29	******** 1.8%
10:30-10:59	******** 1.8%
11:00-11:29	********** 2.2%
11:30-11:59	********* 2.0%
12:00-12:29	********** 2.4%
12:30-12:59	********** 2.2%
1:00 - 1:29	******** 1.9%
1:30 - 1:59	******* 1.6%
2:00 - 2:29	******** 1.8%
2:30 - 2:59	********* 2.0%
3:00 - 3:29	********** 2.5%
3:30 - 3:59	********** 3.3%
4:00 - 4:29	********** 3.5%
4:30 - 4:59	********** 3.5%
5:00 - 5:29	********** 4.1%
5:30 - 5:59	********** 4.6%
6:00 - 6:29	********** 4.9%
6:30 - 6:59	********** 4.8%
7:00 - 7:29	********** 6.6%
7:30 - 7:59	********** 6.8%
8:00 - 8:29	********** 7.3%
8:30 - 8:59	********** 7.5%
9:00 - 9:29	********** 7.0%
9:30 - 9:59	********** 6.5%
10:00-10:29	********** 4.6%
10:30-10:59	********** 2.6%

Total number of viewing instances: 8895.

TABLE 3

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY DAY PARTS

Time Period	Percentage of Total
Morning (10:00-10:59)	*** 3.6%
Noon (11:00-12:59)	***** 8.8%
Afternoon (1:00-4:59)	********** 20.1%
Evening (5:00-6:59)	********** 18.4%
Night (7:00-10:29)	********** 46.4%
Late-Night (10:30-11:00)	** 2.6%
Total number of viewing instances: 8895.	

TABLE 4

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY AGE OF VIEWER

BY AGE GROUPS

Group	Percentage of Total (Percentage of 1974 Total)
Children	********** 17.9% (22.1%)
Teens	******** 8.3% (8.9%)
18 thru 34	********** 39.2% (24.1%)
35 thru 49	********** 11.3% (20.3%)
50 thru 65	********** 20.5% (19.0%)
Over 65	*** 2.9% (4.2%)

Total number of viewing instances: 8895.

in the amount of viewing by 18- to 34-year-olds and a decrease in the amount of viewing by two groups: children and those 35 through 49 years of age.

Program Type. The most popular of the nine categories of programming was situation comedy with 15.9 percent of the total amount of television viewing. The categories of Drama, News-Information, Music-Talk, Adventure and Movie programs follow with between 11.0 and 14.5 percent of the total. The distribution of viewing by program types is presented in Table 5.

The categories of Game Shows, Drama and Situation Comedy show a larger percentage of the viewing distribution in 1975 than in 1974. The categories of Movies, Sports and Children's programs decrease from 1974. These shifts in viewer's use of programming are attributable to the changes in the 1975 network program line-up and the limiting of the 1975 survey to weekday viewing which offers less choice of sports and children's programs than weekend schedules.

Station Use. Station channel usage by Columbus cable viewers was again dominated by the six commercial network affiliates which together claimed 76.6 percent of all viewing. The three commercial affiliates in Indianapolis, WISH, WRTV and WLWI, are the most viewed stations in cabled Columbus homes, followed by independent WTTV. The three independent stations as a

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY PROGRAM TYPE

Program Type	Percentage of Total (Percentage of 1974 Total)
News-Information	********** 13.1% (12.6%)
Game Shows	********** 8.1% (3.3%)
Drama	********** 14.5% (11.3%)
Adventure	********** 12.0% (10.7%)
Situation Comedy	********** 15.9% (12.0%)
Movies	********** 11.0% (20.2%)
Sports	********** 3.1% (7.2%)
Music-Talk-Variety	********** 13.6% (11.7%)
Children's	********** 7.2% (10.1%)
Other	********** 1.5% (1.0%)

Total number of viewing instances: 8895.

group account for 19 percent of all viewing, unchanged from 1974. WTIU, the Bloomington PBS affiliate, received 3.7 percent of all viewing. The Video Access Center received 0.2 percent, a slight increase from 1974.[4] Distribution of the total viewing by channel is presented in Table 6.

The VAC-7 Audience. From the 115 homes in the diary sample, 11 reported viewing some VAC-7 programming. Thus the audience reach of VAC-7 during the four-day period is an estimated 9.6 percent of cabled Columbus homes, a 75 percent gain over the audience reach of February, 1974, which was calculated on the more advantageous base of seven days.

Seventeen viewers of the 310 persons within the diary sample reported viewing VAC-7 during the survey period. Applying this rate of 5.5 percent to all viewers of cabled television in Columbus and assuming an average of 2.7 persons in each of the 3275 homes on the cable, VAC-7 attracted a total audience of 486 viewers during the four-day period. Assuming an average of three persons per cabled household, which is closer to the census figure for all homes in Bartholomew County,

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[4]The average weekly share of VAC viewing reported in the 1974 viewing survey was .174 percent, rounded up to 0.2. That reported in this survey is .236 percent, rounded down to 0.2. The numbers are not significantly different statistically.

TABLE 6

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING

BY CABLE CHANNEL NUMBER

Station and Channel No.	Percentage of Total (Percentage of 1974 Total)
WTTV 2	********** 12.3% (15.2%)
WAVE 3	******** 7.2% (7.3%)
WHMB 5	* 0.1%
WRTV 6	********** 17.0% (19.7%)
VIDEO ACCESS CENTER 7	* 0.2% (0.2%)
WISH 8	********** 27.4% (24.2%)
WGN 9	******** 6.9% (4.4%)
WLKY 10	****** 5.0% (5.3%)
WHAS 11	******** 7.0% (8.4%)
WTIU 12	***** 3.7% (3.2%)
WLWI 13	********** 13.0% (11.6%)
Not Given	* 0.1% (0.4%)
Total number of viewing instances: 8895.	

VAC-7 attracted a total audience of 540 viewers during the four-day period.

Diary Questionnaire. On the final page of the viewing diary, respondents were asked to indicate the length of time they had subscribed to cable and the quality of service received. The results are summarized in the following tables.

Item: How long have you subscribed to cable service in Columbus?

_____ months

Response category	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 1 year	28	24.4
1-3 years	32	27.8
More than 3 years	50	43.5
No answer	5	4.3
	N = 115	

Item: How would you judge the technical quality of the picture delivered by cable service?

Response category	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	4	3.5
Fair	30	26.1
OK	19	16.4
Good	38	33.0
Excellent	12	10.5
No answer	12	10.5
	N = 115	

Item: Are there any channels on which your cable picture is not satisfactory? If so, please list the channel numbers.

Cable Channel	Station	Frequency	Percentage
02	WTTV	17	16.2
03	WAVE	2	1.9
05	WHMB	8	7.6
06	WRTV	3	2.8
07	VAC-7	29	27.8

Cable Channel	Station	Frequency	Percentage
08	WISH	11	10.5
09	WGN	12	11.4
10	WLKY	6	5.8
11	WHAS	6	5.8
12	WTIU	1	0.9
13	WLWI	10	9.6
		N = 105	

Note that more than 70 percent of the viewing sample had subscribed to cable television for more than one year. In results comparable to last year, approximately 60 percent of the subscribers felt that cable service was ok or better with nearly 30 percent finding the service to be fair or worse. Cable Channel 7 (VAC) was named most frequently as the channel on which the cable picture is not satisfactory.

Finally, several members of the sample chose to comment on the final page of the diary. Their opinions are:

- We sometimes watch 11 or 3 instead of 8 or 6 because picture is better.
- Color is bad on all channels.
- There are times when the signal strength on any channel may be poor.
- Reaching the office in time of trouble is a different story. (After rating cable service as good.)
- Our own antenna is much better and clearer.
- I'm about ready to take it out; Channel 9 comes in on Channel 8.

- Tuesday and Wednesday were interrupted service.

Crosstabulations of Reported Viewing. Tables 7 through 12 present a series of crosstabulations of all the viewing data compiled during the viewing survey. Using the categories of programming defined in this study, the tables indicate how the Columbus cable viewers distributed their use of television. The tables reflect what was watched during the four days of television programming, not necessarily what would be viewed if other programming was offered. However, use of these tables in combination can help schedule programs during the optimum viewing period of the intended audience, or help select program types and optimum scheduling for a specific age group.

Tables 7, 8 and 9 present further information related to the viewers' choice of station. Table 7 presents the distribution of station use by time grouped in day parts. This is the same data reported in half-hour time segments in Table 6. Two numbers appear in each cell of the crosstabulation tables. The upper number in each cell is the row percentage--in this case, the percentage share of the viewing for the particular station within the time period (row). The lower number in each cell is the total percentage--the percentage of all viewing (all rows combined) attributed to the particular station in the particular time period. For ex-

ample, the numbers in the cell at the intersection of WGN (column) and Night (row) are 3.4 and 1.6. The upper figure, 3.4, indicates that WGN attracted an audience which is 3.4 percent of all those viewing during the Night time period (row). Seven other stations attracted larger audiences in that time period. The lower figure, 1.6, indicates that this same audience is 1.6 percent of all viewing represented in the table. That is, viewing of all stations and time periods combined.

Table 8 presents the distribution of reported viewing by program type by station in a similar format. Most of VAC-7's programming was classified in the "Other" category, making data in the VAC-7 column meaningless. Nevertheless, the table is presented to provide other data useful for evaluating audience behavior as a basis for program and schedule decisions. Table 9 reports the viewing distributed by age in groups by station.

Table 10 reports the crosstabulation of viewing by program type and age group. Tables 11 and 12 add the dimension of time of viewing to this information. Table 11 presents viewing distributed by time period by program type. Table 12 presents viewing distributed by time period by age groups.

TABLE 7

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY TIME PERIODS BY STATION

EXPRESSED IN ROW PERCENTAGE AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL

Time	Station										
	WTTV	WAVE	WHMB	WRTV	VAC	WISH	WGN	WLKY	WHAS	WTIU	WLWI
Morning (10:00-10:59)	5.0 .3	7.0 .4		17.0 1.0	.8	29.4 1.7	5.2 .3	7.5 .4	.8	13.3 .8	13.9 .8
Noon (11:00-12:59)	17.8 1.2	11.0 .7		3.6 .2		40.6 2.7	3.6 .2	9.1 .6	.3	.3	13.7 .9
Afternoon (1:00-4:59)	14.0 2.8	6.4 1.3	.1	11.6 2.3	.1	22.3 4.5	7.9 1.6	6.0 1.2	13.2 2.6	3.1 .6	15.2 3.1
Evening (5:00-6:59)	17.7 3.3	2.9 .5	.1	16.4 3.0	.3 .1	20.5 3.8	16.7 3.1	4.7 .9	3.2 .6	8.6 1.6	8.8 1.6
Night (7:00-10:30)	9.6 4.4	8.5 3.9	.1	20.3 9.4	.2 .1	31.3 14.5	3.4 1.6	3.9 1.8	7.8 3.6	1.4 .6	13.7 6.3
Late Night (10:30-11:00)	11.5 .3	10.7 .3		38.9 1.0		14.5 .4	3.8 .1	3.4 .1	5.1 .1	1.3	10.7 .3

Total number of viewing instances: 8879.

TABLE 8

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY PROGRAM TYPE BY STATION

EXPRESSED IN ROW PERCENTAGE AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL

Program Type	Station										
	WTTV	WAVE	WHMB	WRTV	VAC	WISH	WGN	WLKY	WHAS	WTIU	WLWI
News-Info	3.9	2.6		29.4	.2	44.9	.4	.8	3.9	4.4	9.4
	.5	.3		3.9		5.9	.1	.1	.5	.6	1.2
Game	6.6	8.3		12.5		17.8	.6	19.8	15.0		19.2
	.6	.7		1.1		1.6	.1	1.8	1.3		1.7
Drama	.4	7.5		13.9		56.2	.4	4.5	5.1	.6	11.5
	.1	1.1		2.0		8.0	.1	.6	.7	.1	1.6
Adventure	14.6	10.3		15.3		31.1	5.2	3.1	1.6		18.8
	1.7	1.2		1.8		3.7	.6	.4	.2		2.3
Comedy	17.4	3.6		.3		19.2	23.6	3.4	14.2	.1	18.3
	2.8	.6		.1		3.1	3.8	.6	2.3		3.0
Movies	10.1	11.4		36.2		3.1	8.1	13.8	1.1	.5	15.7
	1.1	1.3		4.0		.3	.9	1.5	.1	.1	1.7
Sports	69.1	6.5				.7	1.5		22.2		
	2.1	.2							.7		
Music-Talk	2.8	12.2		31.0		30.7	3.5	.5	7.7		11.5
	.4	1.6		4.1		4.0	.5	.1	1.0		1.5
Children's	42.1	2.3	.2	.2			13.0	.2		42.1	
	2.9	.2					.9			2.9	
Other	2.4	.8	3.2	5.6	15.1	62.7			10.3		
				.1	.2	.9			.1		

Total number of viewing instances: 8880.

TABLE 9

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY AGE IN GROUPS BY STATION
EXPRESSED IN ROW PERCENTAGE AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL

Age Group	Station										
	WTTV	WAVE	WHMB	WRTV	VAC	WISH	WGN	WLKY	WHAS	WTIU	WLWI
Children	19.3	7.5	.1	9.6	.1	17.5	12.6	5.2	6.3	14.4	7.4
	3.4	1.3		1.7		3.1	2.3	.9	1.1	2.6	1.3
Teens	10.0	6.1		12.5	.3	27.0	9.4	3.7	7.7	.9	22.5
	.8	.5		1.0		2.2	.8	.3	.6	.1	1.9
18 thru 34	11.9	6.6	.1	18.9	.1	30.2	4.9	5.6	5.9	1.6	14.3
	4.6	2.6		7.4		11.8	1.9	2.2	2.3	.6	5.6
35 thru 49	6.9	7.9		20.4	.1	39.8	6.0	3.3	3.5	.5	11.4
	.8	.9		2.3		4.5	.7	.4	.4	.1	1.3
50 thru 65	10.2	6.6	.1	20.1	.5	27.9	5.8	4.7	10.6	2.5	10.9
	2.1	1.4		4.1	.1	5.7	1.2	1.0	2.2	.5	2.2
Over 65	13.4	25.6		19.9	2.8	19.5	3.3	3.3	4.9		7.3
	.4	.7		.6	.1	.6	.1	.1	.1		.2

Total number of viewing instances: 8504.

TABLE 10

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY PROGRAM TYPE BY AGE IN GROUPS
EXPRESSED IN ROW PERCENTAGE AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL

Program Type	Age Group					
	Children	Teens	18 thru 34	35 thru 49	50 thru 65	Over 65
News-Info	4.5 .6	3.8 .5	36.6 4.8	18.9 2.5	31.7 4.2	4.6 .6
Game Shows	14.0 1.1	3.6 .3	42.2 3.4	4.7 .4	31.1 2.5	4.5 .4
Drama	12.8 1.8	6.2 .9	45.2 6.5	11.2 1.6	22.2 3.2	2.4 .4
Adventure	12.4 1.5	10.6 1.3	42.2 5.1	12.4 1.5	20.3 2.4	2.1 .3
Sit. Comedy	22.8 3.6	19.3 3.1	37.5 6.0	6.4 1.0	12.6 2.0	1.5 .2
Movies	13.0 1.4	8.1 .9	46.1 5.1	14.3 1.6	16.5 1.8	2.0 .2
Sports	4.2 .1	.8	47.7 1.5	15.3 .5	27.1 .8	5.0 .2
Music-Talk	12.3 1.7	6.4 .9	40.7 5.5	12.9 1.7	23.3 3.2	4.4 .6
Children's	79.9 5.8	1.5 .1	13.3 1.0	2.3 .2	2.8 .2	.3
Other	10.4 .2	25.6 .4	20.8 .3	24.8 .4	12.8 .2	5.6 .1

Total number of viewing instances: 8519.

TABLE 11

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY TIME PERIODS BY PROGRAM TYPE
EXPRESSED IN ROW PERCENTAGE AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL

Time Period	Program Type									
	News-Info.	Game	Drama	Adventure	Sit. Comedy	Movies	Sports	Music-Talk	Children's	Other
Morning (10:00-10:59)	.6	33.4 1.2	12.7 .5		3.7 .1	14.2 .5		12.4 .4	21.7 .8	1.2
Noon (11:00-12:59)	12.1 1.1	16.4 1.5	37.7 3.3					18.9 1.7	14.4 1.3	.5
Afternoon (1:00-4:59)	.3 .1	19.3 3.9	15.6 3.1	2.6 .5	21.8 4.4	9.9 2.0	.1	13.6 2.7	16.8 3.4	.1
Evening (5:00-6:59)	39.0 7.2	9.6 1.8	.1	12.9 2.4	27.6 5.1	.1	.2	1.8 .3	8.2 1.5	.5 .1
Night (7:00-10:29)	10.2 4.7	1.3 .6	15.3 7.1	18.9 8.8	13.6 6.3	17.3 8.0	6.6 3.0	14.3 6.6		2.5 1.2
Late-Night (10:30-11:00)	7.2 .2		3.8 .1	12.7 .3	8.1 .2	15.3 .4	.8	50.4 1.3		1.7

Total number of viewing instances: 8894.

TABLE 12

DISTRIBUTION OF VIEWING BY TIME PERIODS BY AGE IN GROUPS
EXPRESSED IN ROW PERCENTAGE AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL

Time Period	Age Group					
	Children	Teens	18 thru 34	35 thru 49	50 thru 65	Over 65
Morning (10:00-10:59)	29.6 1.1	.6	34.4 1.3	8.6 .3	24.8 .9	1.9 .1
Noon (11:00-12:59)	19.2 1.9	.4	44.1 4.0	7.9 .7	23.6 2.1	4.6 .4
Afternoon (1:00-4:59)	25.2 5.0	10.0 2.0	35.4 7.0	7.2 1.4	18.7 3.7	3.4 .7
Evening (5:00-6:59)	20.1 3.7	10.2 1.9	33.5 6.1	10.6 1.9	23.1 4.2	2.4 .4
Night (7:00-10:29)	13.5 6.3	9.2 4.3	41.6 19.5	14.0 6.5	19.2 9.0	2.5 1.2
Late-Night (10:30-11:00)	2.7 .1	3.6 .1	51.8 1.4	15.3 .4	22.5 .6	4.1 .1

Total number of viewing instances: 8518.

CHAPTER III

A SURVEY TO ASSESS PUBLIC REACTIONS TO THE VIDEO ACCESS CENTER

A survey was conducted to assess the reactions of Columbus residents toward television in general and, in particular, the programs and other services of the Video Access Center.

PROCEDURE

On the basis of discussion with Ed Booth of the Irwin-Sweeney-Miller Foundation and Virginia Rouse, Director of the Video Access Center, a modified version of the questionnaire used in the 1974 evaluation was designed, pretested and utilized in the present study. To minimize cost, this year's assessment was conducted via telephone rather than by door-to-door personal interview. The survey instrument was constructed to ascertain each of the following:

(1) Age of respondent
(2) Sex of respondent
(3) Cable or non-cable household
(4) Familiarity with VAC-7
(5) Frequency of VAC-7 viewing
(6) Technical quality of VAC-7 signal
(7) Quality of programming on VAC-7
(8) Desirability of additional local programming in areas such as news, sports and skills training.
(9) VAC-7 programs that are liked and disliked.

The complete questionnaire, as administered during the telephone survey, is appended as Attachment 1.

The decision to conduct a telephone survey rather than door-to-door personal interviews had two consequences. First, it restricted both the number and kind of inquiries possible; information on income, occupation and degree of community involvement was not collected in the present study. Second, it limited, to some extent, the degree to which the results of the 1974 and 1975 evaluations can be compared. When possible, the researchers minimized this problem by utilizing both questions and response options which were similar.

A random sample of 325 names was selected from the Columbus telephone directory. The names chosen were cross-checked with a list of cable subscribers to determine whether the individual subscribed to Columbus Cablevision. This procedure was adopted to assure that cable subscribers would constitute approximately half of the desired sample of 200 respondents, providing an adequate opportunity for VAC-7 to be judged by those who make up its potential audience. Because Columbus Cablevision has a subscriber penetration rate of approximately 32 percent, that is, out of every 100 homes passed by cable, 32 subscribe, making certain that 50 percent of the respondents to the survey were cable

subscribers tended to over-represent their viewpoints in the results.

Six female interviewers were selected and trained. Telephone calls were made from the VAC-7 office on Wednesday and Thursday, March 5-6, between 5:30 and 9:30 p.m. and again on Sunday, March 9, between the hours of 1:00 and 9:00 p.m. Interviewers identified themselves as representatives of the Institute for Communication Research at Indiana University and spoke with anyone over the age of 15 who answered the telephone. Calls were attempted to all names included in the sample at least once; respondents who failed to answer on the first attempt were placed at the bottom of the sample for a subsequent try if the goal of 200 completed interviews had not yet been reached. When the interviewers had finished, the sample consisted of 97 cable subscribers and 103 non-subscribers.

RESULTS

General Considerations. The 97 cable subscribers who responded to the telephone survey represented 48.5 percent of the sample; the non-subscribers (103) were 51.5 percent. The interviewers spoke with more females than males (60 percent versus 40 percent) and contacted more respondents over the age of 40 than under. Age of the respondents was distributed as presented on the following page:

Age of Survey Respondents

Age Group	N	%
Less than 20	18	9.0
21-30	41	20.5
31-40	35	17.5
41-50	49	24.5
51 and over	57	28.5

Total = 200

Respondents between the ages of 31 and 50 were significantly more likely to be subscribers to cable television. This result might be attributable to the pattern of home ownership existing in Columbus.

Attitudes toward Television. The first major section of the survey asked the residents of Columbus to agree or disagree with each of the five statements presented below. Respondents were given the option of saying that they did not care or did not know.

(1) There is too much violence on television.

(2) Columbus should have its own television station.

(3) All people should have the opportunity to express their views on television.

(4) Television news rarely gives good coverage to local community problems.

(5) Television can help groups in the community relate to one another.

Generally, the majority of those interviewed agreed with each of the statements. Almost 69 percent thought

there was too much violence on television (20 percent disagreed). Slightly more than 51 percent thought Columbus should have its own TV station (22 percent disagreed); 75 percent felt all people should have the opportunity to express their views on TV (18 percent disagreed). Nearly 60 percent agreed that TV news rarely gives good coverage to local problems (26 percent disagreed). Almost 80 percent thought TV could help groups relate to one another (9 percent disagreed). The remainder of the respondents either did not care or did not know. There were no meaningful differences between cable subscribers and non-subscribers on any of the statements.

Familiarity with VAC-7. More than 72 percent of the sample was familiar with VAC-7--93 percent of the cable subscribers; 52 percent of the non-subscribers. Respondents over 51 years of age were significantly less familiar with VAC-7; even in this category, however, the percentage familiar with VAC-7 was 50.9 percent.

In comparison to the 1974 evaluation, these results show increased familiarity. Both groups--cable subscribers and non-subscribers--were substantially more familiar with VAC-7. Although it is difficult to compare the results of the 1975 telephone survey with the results of the 1974 personal interviews, the change in VAC-7 familiarity, especially among non-subscribers,

is impressive. The comparison is presented below:

Familiarity with VAC-7

Group	1974 Results	1975 Results	% Difference	% Increase
Subscribers	59/74 80%	91/97 93%	+13%	16.3%
Non-Subscribers	25/76 33%	54/103 52%	+19%	57.6%
Total Sample	84/150 57%	145/200 72%	+15%	26.3%

The 145 survey respondents indicating familiarity with VAC-7 were asked a series of questions designed to assess their level of participation in VAC-7 activities. The results are summarized below:

Participation by Those Familiar with VAC-7

Item:	Yes N	Yes %	No N	No %
Have you appeared on a VAC-7 show?	29	20.0	116	80.0
Have you produced a VAC-7 show?	7	4.8	138	95.2
Have you attended a presentation given by the VAC-7 staff?	16	11.0	129	89.0

On each of these items, respondents over 51 years of age showed significantly less participation. Cable subscription was not related to the degree of participation.

Public Money to Support VAC-7. Respondents familiar with VAC-7 were asked if public money should be used to support its activities.

Item: Do you think public money should be used to support the work of the Video Access Center?

	Yes		No		Don't Know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Those familiar with VAC-7 (N = 145)	65	44.8	39	26.9	41	28.3
Cable subscribers familiar with VAC-7 (N = 91)	47	51.6	23	25.3	21	23.1

Many of the respondents who answered "no" pointed out that they would be more willing to consider the idea if all residents--not just those who subscribe to cable television--could benefit from VAC-7 programs and activities.

VAC-7 Viewing. Among the 145 respondents familiar with VAC-7, 102 individuals (70.3 percent) reported they had watched a program on Channel 7. This groups was 51 percent of the total sample. There was a significant difference between cable subscribers and non-subscribers; nearly 88 percent of the subscribers had watched VAC-7 as opposed to only 40 percent of the non-subscribers.

In comparison to the 1974 study, these results

again represent an increase. In 1974, only 45 of the 150 people interviewed (30 percent) had watched a VAC-7 program.

Item: Have you ever watched any of the programs on Channel 7, the video access channel?

	1974 Results		1975 Results		% Difference	% Increase
	N	%	N	%		
Yes	45/150	30.0	102/200	51.0	+21.0	70.0%

When questioned about the frequency of their VAC-7 viewing, the respondents provided the following information. The center column presents results from the 1974 personal interviews.

Item: About how often do you watch programs on Channel 7, the video access channel?

Response	1974 Results		1975 Results	
	N	%	N	%
Less than once a month	10	22.8	47	46.1
One program each month	6	13.6	16	15.7
One program every two weeks	7	15.9	10	9.8
One program each week	14	31.8	18	17.6
Three or more programs each week	7	15.9	11	10.8
	Total = 44		Total = 102	

These results are difficult to interpret given the large difference in the total number of respondents reporting VAC-7 viewing; the percentage figures from the 1974 data vary considerably because of the relatively

low number of viewing instances. However, it is apparent that the number of people reporting infrequent viewing of VAC-7 has risen substantially.

VAC-7 Quality. The 102 respondents reporting that they had watched VAC-7 programs were asked to assess the technical and program quality of VAC-7 efforts.

Item: Do you think the technical quality of the picture and sound on Channel 7 has improved, gotten worse or remained the same during the last year?

Response	N	%
Improved	32	31.4
Gotten worse	6	5.9
Remained the same	42	41.2
Don't know or didn't answer	22	21.5
	Total = 102	

Item: Do you think the quality of programming on Channel 7 has generally improved, gotten worse or remained the same during the last year?

Response	N	%
Improved	46	45.1
Gotten worse	2	2.0
Remained the same	22	21.6
Don't know or did't answer	32	31.3
	Total = 102	

Although favorable to VAC-7, these results must be viewed in conjunction with the diary results reported

in Chapter II (pgs. 31-32). Thus, while there has clearly been progress in improving VAC-7's technical and program quality, the fact remains that cable subscribers filling out the viewing diaries still named VAC-7's picture as unsatisfactory more often than that of any other channel.

VAC-7 Programs. All respondents reporting VAC-7 viewing were given an opportunity to name VAC-7 programs which they particularly liked. The shows listed below were mentioned; numbers in parentheses refer to the total number of times a program was named.

Human Side of the News (11)
Let's Rap (4)
Basketball shows (4)
Kaleidoscope (3)
Commontalk (3)
Exercise Time (2)
Bulldog Bulletin (2)
Religious programs (2)
Columbus North basketball (2)
Civic programs (2)
Educational programs (2)
Library news (2)
Diabetes
Melody Boys
Terry Teenager and the Tooth Fairy
Music contest solos
Game shows by kids
Olympian Highlights
Cutting hair
Tour of jail
Gospel singers
Singing groups
Country music
Election coverage
Mt. Healthy School
Mary Carmichael
Parkside and Francis Smith Schools
ABC Teachers
Programs on homemaking
Belly Dancing

Senior citizen
Hog-butchering
Telethon coverage
Talk-type shows
Hockey
Musical groups
Current events
Backstage at IU Opera
Special programs
Shows done by young people
Mr. Taylor's show
Local entertainment

When given the opportunity to name VAC-7 programs which they disliked, respondents named only two programs. In addition, several of those interviewed took this opportunity to present reasons for not watching VAC-7 more often.

Parkside interest group show
Country music groups

Picture quality very poor
People talk without direction, ramble on
Poor reception
No schedule

It should be noted that most respondents had considerable difficulty in naming VAC-7 programs. Although seemingly familiar with the shows as indicated by their descriptions, they were unable to identify them by title.

Finally, in this section, it seems appropriate to report comments on both Commontalk and Human Side of the News, two programs of special interest to VAC-7 management. There were no meaningful suggestions for topics to be discussed on Commontalk and only eight

comments on Human Side of the News.

Suggestions for stories (3)

- Specific details on how money is spent at local and federal levels of government.
- Local political parties.
- Explanations of new laws and regulations

Suggestions for improvement (5)

- More religious news
- More low-income people expressing their views
- More on local problems
- More creative-dramatic things
- Less of the interviewer saying "yeah" instead of "yes"

Audience Preferences. The final series of questions, administered to all 200 respondents, asked if they would like to see more programming of various types on Columbus TV.

Type of Program	Yes		No		No Opinion	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
More local news	161	80.5	29	14.5	10	5.0
More sports	116	58.0	72	36.0	12	6.0
More art programs	122	61.0	64	32.0	14	7.0
More skills training	148	74.0	43	21.5	9	4.5
More educational shows	162	81.0	27	13.5	11	5.5
More entertainment	147	73.5	37	18.5	16	8.0

There were no significant differences between cable subscribers and non-subscribers. Sex and age

of the respondent made no difference.

Other statistical analyses utilizing age, sex, subscription to cable television and familiarity with VAC-7 were attempted. Results were meaningless, insignificant or both.

SUMMARY

Taken collectively, and within the limits of comparability necessary because of differences in methodology between the 1974 and 1975 evaluations, the results of this telephone survey indicate that VAC-7 has made progress. More than 70 percent of the 1975 sample was familiar with VAC-7; over 50 percent of the respondents reported that they had viewed VAC-7; 45 percent of those who had watched felt that the program quality had improved; and many of the shows cablecast on Channel 7 were mentioned by one or more of the respondents as "particularly liked."

At the same time, the respondents clearly indicated a number of areas in which improvement is needed. Older citizens were not as familiar with VAC-7 as other groups; over 60 percent of the respondents who has watched VAC-7 reported viewing once a month or less; and technical quality was seen as improved by only 31 percent of those who had watched. Finally, programs appeared to be weak in identification as

indicated by the difficulty respondents had in naming VAC-7 shows.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From February, 1974 through February, 1975, VAC-7 and other access centers throughout the United States faced an inflationary economy. At the same time, in response to the recommendations made by this research team in the 1974 evaluation, VAC-7 was attempting to: (1) broaden its funding base, (2) increase its audience reach, (3) become better known in the community, and (4) seek out community groups for participation in a wider variety of public access programming. On the basis of the descriptive information presented in this report, as well as the data available from the viewing diaries and telephone survey, VAC-7 is making progress in each of these areas.

(1) Financial support for VAC-7 now comes from a wider variety of local, state and federal sources. This has two significant effects.

(a) VAC-7 now produces programming in areas where organizations are willing to provide financial support; thus, VAC-7 is responding to what is perceived as an audience need by at least one group and there is a greater likelihood of someone utilizing the final product (e.g., the contract with the Columbus hospital).

(b) VAC-7 is decreasing its dependency on any single funding organization.

Clearly, continued efforts to obtain funds from a variety of sources are not only of immediate value to VAC-7 in financial terms but also of importance in the long-range development of the VAC-7 audience.

(2) There is evidence, from both the telephone survey and the viewing diaries, to indicate that the number of individuals and households utilizing VAC-7 has risen. Although the diaries show that the percentage of VAC-7 viewing, relative to all TV viewing in Columbus, is statistically no larger in 1975 than 1974, the fact remains that more people are using VAC-7, even though on a less than regular basis. People may be somewhat hesitant to watch regularly because, as the diaries indicated, VAC-7 picture quality is the most unsatisfactory of all channels received on the cable. This may account for VAC-7 viewers selecting only shows of particular interest rather than regularly watching that which VAC-7 offers.

On the other hand, it may be that the viewing of access television is similar to the viewing of public television; that is, viewers selectively seek out and view programs of interest, sometimes in spite of technical problems. Lovers of barbershop quartet music, for example, are likely to search out and view programming of that type with little concern for the "quality" of the picture being transmitted.

VAC-7 should continue to ascertain the needs of its potential audience and systematically program to those needs. In 1974, Columbus residents expressed a strong desire for local news and VAC-7's Human Side of the News was created to fill that need. This was the show most often mentioned by those interviewed in 1975; and yet the program showed little viewership in the diaries. This lack of utilization could be attributed to any or all of the following: (1) technical quality of the signal, (2) lack of sufficient "hard news" content on local problems, or (3) lack of audience awareness.

There are several steps which could be taken to deal effectively with all of these potential explanations for the program's failure to garner a regular, loyal audience. For example, VAC-7 could produce a more complete local news program, shown more frequently and promoted as the only Columbus television news program. This, however, would be costly and VAC-7 may prefer to continue Human Side of the News as is while simultaneously developing other programs to serve audience needs currently unsatisfied by programming available in the Columbus area.

(3) The promotion of VAC-7 has been successful. More than 70 percent of those interviewed, including over 50 percent of the non-cable respondents, were familiar with VAC-7; 51 percent had watched a program--

increases in one year of 26 percent and 70 percent respectively. Non-subscribers to cable television showed an increase in familiarity of nearly 58 percent over 1974 non-subscribers. These changes are the result of several factors: adoption of a common name (VAC-7); increased promotional activity; appearances by VAC-7 staff throughout the Columbus area; membership drives; regularly scheduled program guides in the local newspaper; and so on. It is essential for the members of a community to be aware of an organization before they can utilize its services. Efforts to create this awareness should continue.

One specific area in which additional promotional effort is needed is program identification. Viewers had great difficulty in naming programs with which they were obviously familiar. This problem may be due to the great variety of programming on VAC-7; it may also result from the large number of once-only shows produced as part of the public access movement. Efforts should now be made, however, to obtain stronger program identification. This could be accomplished by superimposing the title while the program is being played; adhering to the same title throughout a series; using easy-to-remember, yet catchy titles; and increasing program promotion. All of these efforts, however, should not diminish or exclude the continued promotion of the VAC-7 name. Awareness and recognition of VAC-7 can help in

the promotion of its programs; the process does not work in reverse.

(4) VAC-7 has become involved in the community by expanding the number of groups which produce and/or appear on VAC-7 programs. These activities have led to VAC-7 becoming identified as a communications crossroads in Columbus. Smaller groups involved in the arts as well as business, social and community-betterment activities have become aware of VAC-7 as a way to reach the larger community. Their efforts not only enhance the diversity of programming available on VAC-7 but also facilitate group interaction and familiarize people with television as a usable communications tool. These activities, as well as special programs related to important community issues, can only help VAC-7 grow.

Finally, the potential impact of having native Columbus people managing and staffing VAC-7 should not be underestimated. Through this change, VAC-7 can be more easily integrated into the community. This shift may well represent the evolutionary step needed to take public access television from a fun, creative video activity to an established community organization helping concerned citizens communicate with one another. In the difficult economic times ahead, there will be numerous ways to justify and fund the latter type of organization.

Attachment 1

Institute for Communication Research
Department of Telecommunications
VAC Telephone Questionnaire

Hello, this is _____ from the Institute for Communication Research at Indiana University. We're studying the way people in Columbus use television. Your name was selected as part of a small number of people we are contacting for this study. I have some interesting questions which will take only a few minutes of your time.

1. What are your two most favorite TV shows....the ones you really hate to miss? 4 _____
5 _____
6 _____

2. I'm going to make some statements about television; after each, I'd appreciate it if you would indicate whether you agree or disagree; if you really don't care or don't know, just say that.

There is too much violence on television.

____ Agree _____ Disagree _____Don't care 7 _____

Columbus should have its own television station.

_____Agree _____ Disagree _____Don't care 8 _____

All people should have the opportunity to express their views on television.

____ Agree _____ Disagree _____Don't care 9 _____

Television news rarely gives good coverage to local community problems.

____ Agree _____ Disagree _____Don't care 10 _____

Television can help groups in the community relate to one another.

____ Agree _____Disagree _____Don't care 11 _____

3. Thank you....Are you familiar with the Video Access Center, Channel 7 here in Columbus?

____ Yes (GO TO #4) ____ No (GO TO #15) 12 _____

4. Have you appeared on one of their programs?

____ Yes ____ No 13 ____

5. Have you helped to produce a show for the Video Access Center?

____ Yes ____ No 14 ____

6. Have you attended any presentations given by the staff of the Video Access Center?

____ Yes ____ No 15 ____

7. Do you think public money should be used to support the work of the Video Access Center?

____ Yes ____ No 16 ____

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8. Have you ever watched any of the programs on Channel 7, the video access channel?

____ Yes (GO TO #9) ____ No (GO TO #15) 17 ____

9. About how often do you watch programs on Channel 7? (CHECK THE OPTION WHICH BEST CORRESPONDS TO ANSWER.)

_____ less than once a month
_____ one program a month
_____ one program every two weeks
_____ one program each week
_____ 3 or more programs each week 18 ____

10. Which of the programs on Channel 7 do you particularly like or dislike?

LIKE	DISLIKE
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____

(GIVE THE RESPONDENT THE OPPORTUNITY TO ANSWER IN EACH OF THE CATEGORIES; IF THE INFORMATION FOR ONE OF THE CATEGORIES IS NOT VOLUNTEERED, ASK ABOUT IT SPECIFICALLY.)

11. ONLY IF COMMON TALK IS MENTIONED.

Are there any specific topic areas which you would suggest for future "Common Talk" programs?

12. ONLY IF HUMAN SIDE OF THE NEWS IS MENTIONED.

What types of stories would you prefer to see on Human Side of the News? Any ideas to improve it?

13. Do you think the technical quality of the picture and sound on Channel 7 has improved, gotten worse or remained the same during the last year?

____ Improved ____ Gotten worse ____ Remained the same 19 ____

14. Do you think the quality of programming on Channel 7 has generally improved, gotten worse or remained the same during the last year?

____ Improved ____ Gotten worse ____ Remained the same 20 ____

15. Would you like to see more local news on Columbus TV? 21 ____

_____ Yes _____ No

16. How about more local sports? 22 ____

_____ Yes _____ No

17. More art and cultural programming? 23 ____

_____ Yes _____ No

18. More crafts and skills training? 24 ____

_____ Yes _____ No

19. More educational and instructional programming? 25 ____

_____ Yes _____ No

20. More entertainment? 26 ____

_____ Yes _____ No

Thank you very much for your cooperation....just two more short questions. May we have your approximate age and do you subscribe to Columbus Cable Television?

AGE (PLACE A CHECK BY THE APPROPRIATE CATEGORY)

_____ less than 20
_____ 21-30
_____ 31-40
_____ 41-50
_____ 51+

SUBSCRIBE TO CABLE TV

_____ Yes _____ No

SEX OF RESPONDENT

_____ Male _____ Female

Thank you again, good by.

Name of Respondent (from card) _____

Interviewer: _____